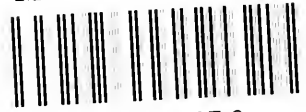


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S P E E C H
OF
GEN. ARTHUR C. DUCAT,

Delivered at ROSEHILL CEMETERY, May 31st, 1879.

At the dedication of the Monument erected to the Soldiers of the Bridges Battery of the Army
of the Cumberland who fell during the War of the Rebellion.

GENERAL DUCAT upon being introduced by Captain White, the Pres't of the Bridges' Battery Association, spoke as follows :

I have been asked by some of my friends—survivors of Bridges Battery of the Army of the Cumberland—to come here to-day and say a few words at the dedication of the monument erected here to the memory of fallen heroes.

It is with sentiments of the deepest emotion that I, in my humble way, briefly address you and attempt to perform the duty for which I have been unexpectedly detailed.

It is the first time I ever addressed a public assemblage, but I do not shrink from the task, conscious as I am that, in reciting the history of this brave Battery, and alluding to the noble and valorous deeds of those whose ashes are here with us, my words will command the attention of every true American who reveres the memory of his national dead. It has become rather the habit of our countrymen to make eulogistic orations at the tombs of their friends ; I shall not attempt to do so any further than it is necessary to do simple justice to their memories. It would not become us, on this occasion, to indulge in eulogies which would be distasteful to the modest but earnest soldiers who sleep here, could they hear us from their graves. We commit them, with all their errors, their sudden and perhaps unexpected death, to the mercy of their Creator. We will keep their memories dear and precious to us, and their fame and their glory ever green and bright, among us and our children. This is the purpose for which this beau-

tiful monument—surmounted by the statue of Hope, inscribed with the fields of their fame, decorated with the arm of their service, and surrounded by their graves—has been erected.

We have convened here to-day from all the surrounding country, from the great city, from all occupations and walks of life, to dedicate to good, brave and patriotic soldiers this tribute erected by surviving comrades and grateful and appreciative citizens. We are here this lovely, peaceful day in May, in this beautiful City of the Dead, in the center of this happy, prosperous, and at last, thank God, free country, to strew flowers on the graves of men, our respect for whose memories this act so touchingly, beautifully, and tenderly illustrates. We come to do all that is now left us to do, to pay these memorial tributes to those who have so freely given their young lives that we may enjoy in peace and happiness the blessings which God has so lavishly bestowed upon this favored land—who have given themselves a sacrifice to true liberty, that every blot should be removed from the national escutcheon—who left their families, friends, and all who were dear to them: their peaceful and happy homes—who abandoned their prospects and aspirations in life, without promise or hope of reward—to face death and the hardships and horrors of war; that our country, without a blemish, might be left to us intact as we received it from the hands of its Fathers, purified by time and the march of human progress.

They went to assert and demonstrate to the world that our Republic was no vain and empty boast, and, as the result to-day, we are at peace with all nations. The flag of this our country, now truly emblematic of freedom, and more than ever before the emblem of a nation created, defended and preserved by its valor and its integrity, floats under every sky, honored by all who love the free institutions and government it represents; feared but unassailed by all who oppress and enslave.

It would gratify me exceedingly to-day to tell you of the life of each and every one of the body of brave souls who fell in Bridges Battery and whose names are here inscribed—to recite a detailed history of the command—but the time given me will only permit of a comparatively hasty and brief notice.* I would like to be able to tell you how gallantly and well each man did his duty in the place where each belonged.

To-day we have to do only with the dead. We have not come to hear of or speak of the living, and should I mention any living man it will be for the purpose of making the history of the Battery understood more clearly and in the proper connection with circumstances.

Bridges Battery, or rather the company from which it was ultimately organized, was enlisted about the time of the first attack on Fort Sumter, as a company of engineer soldiers, sappers and miners. It was foreseen that in a great war, which was to every thinking mind inevitable, a company of this kind was a necessity of the volunteer service. This company, composed of men well qualified for the duties of engineer troops, was tendered first to the Executive of Illinois, and then daily for weeks to the general government, but was refused by both in the capacity offered. Such troops, much worse qualified for engineer soldiers, were subsequently organized by regiments and brigades in all our armies. Some of the men then enlisted as soldiers in regiments going to the front. The company, as an organization, attached itself to and formed "G" company of the Nineteenth Illinois Infantry, under Colonel Turchin, but subsequently commanded by the lamented Scott.

In July, 1861, Crossly and Thornton, of the company, were killed in the performance of assigned duty.

The company, with its regiment, served under General Fremont, and was subsequently ordered to the Army of the Potomac. This order was countermanded by Providence. Some chivalric sympathizers at Huron,

Indiana, having tampered with a railroad bridge, precipitated the train, with the regiment on board, down sixty feet, killing Sealock, Brattstown, Cutting, and Noble, and injuring fifty others of the company. This necessitated the return of the regiment to Cincinnati for re-equipment. In the meantime it became necessary to reinforce General Robert Anderson, in Kentucky, and the Nineteenth was assigned to General O. M. Mitchell's division, and served in all the marches and actions of General Buell's army up to the time General Rosecrans took command. Captain Bridges, in command of the company at this time, was detailed to assist the Chief Engineer of the army at Nashville. Field-artillery being needed, the company was selected to form a battery, being provided with the only available guns, some captured at Forts Donelson and Zollicoffer, and in one week the company had the guns mounted, and in position, in the defences of Nashville, the officers and men applying themselves to their new duty in a manner that demonstrated immediately that no error had been made in their detail as artillery. On the 14th of February, 1863, the company received its order from the War Department to organize a six-gun field battery, and had the maximum number of men in a few weeks. Marching from Nashville to Murfreesboro, constant and judicious drill and industry soon made the battery one of the best equipped and most efficient commands in the volunteer service.

The battery was assigned to the Pioneer Brigade (an engineer corps), but, desiring more active service, at the request of its officers, it was assigned to the Second Division of the Fourteenth Army Corps, commanded by Major General Geo. H. Thomas, the noblest Roman of them all—the model soldier and good man. They served with this corps in the brilliant movement on Tullahoma, across the Cumberland Mountains, Tennessee River, the Sand and Raccoon Ranges, in the action at Dug Gap, and the battle of Chickamauga.

In those days that tried the souls of our truest and our best, this battery, with the grand old Army of the Cumberland, was true to itself, doing its duty bravely and well, losing twenty-six men—six killed, six wounded and fourteen captured, with forty-six horses. Here, in the battle of the 20th of September, fell the gallant Lieutenant Bishop, fighting his guns to the last; even until the enemy was in his battery and on his flanks, and bayonetting his men, did he fire his guns, double-shotted, and fell dead at his post. No braver soldier sleeps. Here also fell the brave men—Ferris, Hammond, Haas, and Tenneson; all fighting and serving their guns, they met their death in the very teeth of the enemy. The battery here brought off four of its guns by hand, the horses having been killed, and held its position until ordered by General Thomas to fall back.

On the 21st, under Major General Geo. H. Thomas, the battery did its duty.

At the battle of Mission Ridge, the battery did most important and gallant service, and was mentioned by General Thomas in his official report. It occupied Orchard Knob, in advance of our main line. In the first day's operations, in six hours after daylight, fourteen guns had been driven out of the enemy's first line of works, and their entire artillery had retreated to the top of the ridge. The signal of six guns, for the grand charge upon Mission Ridge, was fired by this battery, which maintained its position until the close of the battle. The long and arduous winter campaign in East Tennessee, to reinforce General Burnside, was commenced on the 27th day of November, 1863. The battery was constantly marching, and always ready and willing for duty. The men suffered great privations in this campaign, from cold, exposure and want, but they suffered without a word of complaint. Here was sown the seed for the grave for more than one of their number.

The battery served at Tunnel Hill, Buzzard Roost,

Resaca, Adairsville, Kingston, and Cassville. At the latter place Captain Bridges was made Chief of Artillery of the Fourth Army Corps. The battery, under command of Lieutenant Temple, distinguished itself at Mt. Hope Church, and other places, and, under Lieutenant White, won an imperishable reputation at Pine Mountain and Kenesaw Mountain. At the last mentioned battle fell the gallant Lieutenant Seborn, working his section at short range against the artillery of the enemy, the battery silencing more than twice its number of guns.

At Chattahoochee River the battery did splendid service, destroying the pontoon bridge of the enemy by its accurate and rapid practice, and receiving the compliments of General Thomas—and those of us here who have been soldiers of his army know well that, with his rigid uprightness, he never bestowed a compliment unless it was well deserved. Here Hathaway was killed in battle. At Peach Tree Creek and Atlanta, the battery did good service, and was again complimented by General Thomas. At Franklin the battery was thrown into the salient angle of our lines, with little protection, and maintained its position during the entire battle. At one period the advance of the enemy was fifty yards in rear of the position, with the guns of four batteries and Opdyke's Brigade, in which was the Eighty-eighth Illinois, and on its flank the Seventy-second Illinois, our own gallant men. Due attention was paid to the brave brigade of the enemy—it never rejoined its comrades. The enemy lost thirteen general officers on this afternoon. It was a crushing defeat to Hood.

At the battle of Nashville the battery was again in action, retaining the reputation that distinguished it throughout the war. Having taken an honorable part in thirty engagements and traveled 20,000 miles in the service, the battery was mustered out in July, 1865. Returning to Chicago, the citizens gave it a reception worthy of its deeds and its fame.

The names of the honored dead are inscribed on this

monument and on the tablets which surround it. It is proper here that I should mention poor Brown, who for three days, with a broken leg, at Andersonville prison, received no surgical aid and died. Here also poor Hemmifer pined and died.

It has been said that republics are ungrateful. The nature of our government is such, that without the consent of our own people, through their representatives, sufficient expenditures for the support of wounded soldiers and sailors, widows and orphans of soldiers and sailors, cannot be made, but we have evidence to-day, in these beautiful monuments we are here to dedicate, that the hearts of our people are right, and that appeals to them in any way that may be necessary to honor the dead or comfort those they left behind, and the wounded soldier or sailor, will never be in vain. Let us hope that your voices will be raised in behalf of those left crippled and homeless, but not friendless, by our wars, and that the good and generous will do in this respect their duty as promptly and nobly as did the soldiers and sailors for their sakes. I commend them to your generous sympathies.

There is a grave of one of our bravest and best within the enclosure of this Cemetery unmarked. I hope that when we assemble here one year from to-day, a fitting monument will be erected to his memory. It is the grave of the lamented General Ransom.

After these dedications of to-day, and in the future on this Anniversary, in honoring our dead, we know no Company, no Regiment, no Brigade, no Division, no Corps, no Army, no State, no Birthplace—all were soldiers of the Republic who died for it—we honor all alike.

There is to me something exceedingly touching in this annual decoration of the Soldiers graves with flowers, by loving hands.

I am sure it makes us all better men and women to come here once a year and place wreaths of evergreens and blossoms on the mounds that surround us, emblem-



atic of those higher, immortal crowns which we earnestly hope and believe our departed friends have attained. I know it touches me deeply, and in a way unfelt to the same extent until the day comes around again, and reminds me, as well as all of us, that what we now enjoy has not been without its price.

Such acts of ours foster and nourish the military spirit of our young men. They teach them that to be a soldier of the Republic of the United States, is not to be forgotten when they fall in the path of their duty; and, to be practical, in a country like ours, where the military establishment is so limited, it is necessary that something be done to keep alive a true soldierly feeling. One of the greatest incentives to its achievement is the knowledge that brave and meritorious acts and services are appreciated and acknowledged.

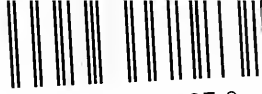
It must be a very great consolation to the relatives and friends of the soldiers who sleep around us, that their remains have been gathered to this pleasant place where they can come and hold with them the sweet silent converse of memories of the past.

To those whose loved and lost sleep in unknown graves, on the bloody fields of the national contests, by the roadside, on the mountains, in the swamps, and wild ravines of the South, I would say, be consoled that they died and were buried like soldiers when they fell.

"On Fame's eternal camping ground
Their silent tents are spread,
And glory guards with solemn round,
The bivouac of the dead."

Our noble dead have awakened to another morn than ours. May their morn have brightened into perfect day. May they look down gratefully to-day upon those who have raised this modest homage to their memories. May they look down with pleasure upon those who bear or inherit their honor and their name

And may we, as a people, be thankful for the age in which it has pleased providence to cast our lot, and for the country of which we are citizens, men and women.



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